STANDING COMMITTEE
on
COMMUNITY SERVICES

ANNUAL REPORT
2009 – 2010

First and Second Sessions of the Sixty-first General Assembly

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Honourable Charlie Parker
Speaker
House of Assembly
Province House
Halifax, Nova Scotia

Dear Mr. Speaker:

On behalf of the Standing Committee on Community Services, I am pleased to submit the Annual Report of the Committee for the First and Second Sessions of the Sixty-first General Assembly.

Respectfully submitted,

Jim Morton, MLA, Kings North
Chair
Standing Committee on Community Services

Halifax, Nova Scotia
2010

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INTRODUCTION

The Standing Committee on Community Services, an all-party Committee of the House of Assembly, was struck at the beginning of the First Session of the Sixty-first General Assembly. Pursuant to Rule 60(2)(d) of the ***Province of Nova Scotia Rules and Forms of Procedures of the House of Assembly:***

> **(d)** the Community Services Committee is established for the purpose of considering matters normally assigned to or within the purview of the Departments and Ministers of Business and Consumer Services and of Municipal Affairs and matters relating to the Human Rights Commission and the Nova Scotia Sport and Recreation Commission.

In 1998, the Speaker, as Chairman of the Legislature's Internal Economy Board, gave the Community Services Committee written permission to also consider matters within the purview of the Department of Health and the Department of Community Services.

MEMBERSHIP

There shall be no more than nine Members of the Legislative Assembly appointed to this committee. The current membership of the Standing Committee on Community Services is as follows:

Mr. Jim Morton, MLA - Chair
Kings North

Mr. Gary Ramey, MLA – Vice Chair
Lunenburg West

Mr. Leonard Preyra, MLA
Halifax Citadel-Sable Island

Ms. Michèle Raymond, MLA
Halifax Atlantic

Mr. Maurice Smith, MLA
Antigonish

Mr. Leo Glavine, MLA
Kings West

Mr. Geoff MacLellan, MLA
Glace Bay

Honourable Chris d'Entremont, MLA
Argyle

Mr. Alfie MacLeod, MLA
Cape Breton West

MEMBERSHIP CHANGES

During the First and Second Sessions of the Sixty-first General Assembly, the committee underwent the following membership changes:

Mr. Trevor Zinck was replaced by Mr. Maurice Smith.
Ms. Kelly Regan was replaced by Mr. Geoff MacLellan.

PROCEDURES AND OPERATIONS

The Community Services Committee traditionally meets once a month. These meetings are usually held on the first Tuesday of the month in the Legislative Committees offices. During the First and Second Sessions of the Sixty-first General Assembly the committee met on the following dates:

October 20, 2009
November 3, 2009
January 5, 2010
February 2, 2010
March 2, 2010
April 6, 2010
May 4, 2010
June 1, 2010

NOTICES, TRANSCRIPTS AND REPORTS

NOTICES

Notices of the committee meetings are sent to all members of the committee, caucus office staff, legislative staff and the House of Assembly press gallery. The notices are also posted in Province House and on the Community Services Committee website at the following address: http://www.gov.ns.ca/legislature/committees/schedcs.html

TRANSCRIPTS

Transcripts of all Community Services Committee meetings are available from the Legislative Library in Province House, the Legislative Committees Office, or online at the Community Services Committee website at the following address:
http://www.gov.ns.ca/legislature/hansard/comm/cs/

REPORTS

All reports of the Standing Committee on Community Services are compiled by the Legislative Committees Office and forwarded to committee members for consideration. Once the report is finalized, it is then distributed as follows:

To the Speaker and the Clerk of the House of Assembly, all Members of the Legislative Assembly, all witnesses who appeared before the committee, the Legislative Library in Nova Scotia and all other provinces and territories, the caucus offices and the media. This report is also available to the general public on request from the Legislative Committees Office and is available online at the committee's website at the following address: http://www.gov.ns.ca/legislature/COMMITTEES/cs_pubs.html

RESEARCH MATERIAL

Research material for the Community Services Committee is compiled by the Legislative Library and distributed to members by the committee clerk. Reference material is provided to members and caucus staff prior to the meeting date. A copy of this material is also made available to the witnesses appearing before the committee, to the Legislative Library in Province House and to Hansard Reporting Services.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The committee wishes to extend its gratitude to all witnesses for their time and co-operation; as well as to Ms. Kim Langille, Committee Clerk, and the staff of the Legislative Committees Office, for the coordination of committee meetings; and to Ms. Heather Ludlow, Information Services Librarian, for the organization of research for committee meetings. Others whose assistance has been invaluable to the committee are: Mr. Robert Kinsman, Editor of Hansard Reporting Services, and staff; Mr. James MacInnes, Coordinator/Director of Legislative Television and Broadcast Services, and staff; and Ms. Margaret Murphy, Legislative Librarian, and staff.

WITNESSES

October 20, 2009	**Organizational Meeting**
November 3, 2009	**Brain Injury Association of Nova Scotia**
November 3, 2009	**Department of Community Services/Department of Labour and Workforce Development** **Re: Poverty Reduction Strategy**
January 5, 2010	**Department of Community Services** **Re: Child and Youth Strategy**
January 5, 2010	**Department of Health Promotion and Protection** **Re: Youth Health Centres**
February 2, 2010	**Department of Community Services** **Re: Housing/Federal Stimulus Money**
March 2, 2010	**Department of Community Services/Department of Labour and Workforce Development** **Re: Poverty Reduction Strategy (continuation)**
April 6, 2010	**Department of Justice** **Re: Maintenance Enforcement Program**
May 4, 2010	**Department of Community Services** **Re: Services for Persons with Disabilities**
May 4, 2010	**Nova Scotia Disabled Persons Commission** **Re: Services for Persons with Disabilities**
May 4, 2010	**Kings Regional Rehabilitation Centre** **Re: Services for Persons with Disabilities**
June 1, 2010	**Department of Health** **Re: Children's Mental Health Services**

PUBLIC

HEARINGS

ORGANIZATIONAL MEETING — October 20, 2009

WITNESSES

No witnesses are present at organizational meetings.

MATTERS OF DISCUSSION

The committee met to organize their agenda of potential witnesses and topics for future meetings.

The committee agreed it would meet between the hours of 1:00 pm and 3:00 pm when the House of Assembly is not in session, and between the hours of 9:00 am and 11:00 am when the House of Assembly is in session.

MOTIONS

There were no motions.

DOCUMENTATION

There were no requests for documentation.

TRANSCRIPT

Full details of this meeting can be found in the transcript which is available online at:
http://www.gov.ns.ca/legislature/hansard/comm/cs/cs_2009oct20.htm

BRAIN INJURY ASSOCIATION OF NOVA SCOTIA — November 3, 2009

WITNESSES

Brain Injury Association of Nova Scotia
Mr. Don Sullivan, President
Ms. Margo Dauphinee, Executive Director
Ms. Jane Warren, Past President

MATTERS OF DISCUSSION

The Brain Injury Association of Nova Scotia (BIANS) requested an appearance before the committee. The purpose of the meeting was to provide an overview of the services provided by BIANS as well as providing information regarding the needs of brain injured Nova Scotians. It was indicated that there is a need for an acquired brain injury strategy to be implemented in the province.

MOTIONS

There were no motions.

DOCUMENTATION

The following information was requested and received:

- Information regarding the 30,000-40,000 people affected by brain injuries and how they fit into the continuum and where the more specific gaps in service are.

TRANSCRIPT

Full details of this meeting can be found in the transcript which is available online at:
http://www.gov.ns.ca/legislature/hansard/comm/cs/cs_2009nov03.htm

POVERTY REDUCTION STRATEGY — November 3, 2009

WITNESSES

Department of Community Services
Ms. Judith Ferguson, Deputy Minister
Ms. Lynn Hartwell, Executive Director, Policy and Information Management

Department of Labour and Workforce Development
Ms. Margaret MacDonald, Deputy Minister
Mr. Stuart Gourley, Senior Executive Director

MATTERS OF DISCUSSION

The purpose of the meeting was to obtain an overview of the Poverty Reduction Strategy.

MOTIONS

There were no motions.

DOCUMENTATION

There were no requests for documentation. The witnesses were scheduled to appear before the committee at a future meeting to present details on developments to the Poverty Reduction Strategy.

TRANSCRIPT

Full details of this meeting can be found in the transcript which is available online at:
http://www.gov.ns.ca/legislature/hansard/comm/cs/cs_2009nvm03.htm

CHILD AND YOUTH STRATEGY — January 5, 2010

WITNESSES

Department of Community Services
Ms. Judith Ferguson, Deputy Minister
Mr. Robert Wright, Executive Director, Child and Youth Strategy

MATTERS OF DISCUSSION

The purpose of the meeting was to obtain an overview of the Child and Youth Strategy.

MOTIONS

There were no motions.

DOCUMENTATION

The following information was requested and received:

- Information on the progress of the Nunn Commission recommendations.

TRANSCRIPT

Full details of this meeting can be found in the transcript which is available online at:
http://www.gov.ns.ca/legislature/hansard/comm/cs/cs_2010jan05.htm

YOUTH HEALTH CENTRES — January 5, 2010

WITNESSES

Department of Health Promotion and Protection
Mr. Duff Montgomerie, Deputy Minister
Ms. Heather Christian, Director, Healthy Development
Mr. Morris Green, Coordinator, Youth Health, Healthy Development

MATTERS OF DISCUSSION

The purpose of the meeting was to obtain an overview of Youth Health Centres in the province.

MOTIONS

There were no motions.

DOCUMENTATION

The following information was requested and received:

- How many or what percentage of Youth Health Centres have full-time coordinators?

TRANSCRIPT

Full details of this meeting can be found in the transcript which is available online at:
http://www.gov.ns.ca/legislature/hansard/comm/cs/cs_2010jry05.htm

HOUSING/FEDERAL STIMULUS MONEY — February 2, 2010

WITNESSES

Department of Community Services
Ms. Judith Ferguson, Deputy Minister
Mr. David Ryan, Executive Director, Employment Support, Income Assistance & Housing
Mr. Gary Porter, Executive Director, Housing Authorities & Property Operations
Mr. Dan Troke, Director of Housing

MATTERS OF DISCUSSION

The purpose of the meeting was to obtain an overview of affordable housing with a particular focus on federal stimulus funding.

MOTIONS

There were no motions.

DOCUMENTATION

The following information was requested and received:

- A breakdown of what is spent in Nova Scotia, per year, for affordable housing.

TRANSCRIPT

Full details of this meeting can be found in the transcript which is available online at:
http://www.gov.ns.ca/legislature/hansard/comm/cs/cs_2010feb02.htm

POVERTY REDUCTION STRATEGY (continuation) March 2, 2010

WITNESSES

Department of Community Services
Ms. Judith Ferguson, Deputy Minister
Ms. Brenda Murray, Director, Policy, Planning & Research
Mr. Ulrich vom Hagen, Coordinator, Poverty Reduction
Ms. Denise MacDonald-Billard, Manager, Employment Support Income Assistance

Department of Labour and Workforce Development
Ms. Margaret MacDonald, Deputy Minister
Ms. Carmelle d'Entremont, Director

MATTERS OF DISCUSSION

This was a continuation of the presentation given to members on November 3, 2009, and provided further information regarding the Poverty Reduction Strategy, as well as follow-up information in areas of interest to the committee from the previous meeting.

MOTIONS

The following motion was deferred pending confirmation regarding whether the Minister of Community Services has met with the Community Coalition to End Poverty:

> "THAT the committee write to the Minister of Community Services, asking her to host a meeting with the Poverty Reduction Working Group and the Community Coalition to End Poverty, for their input."

DOCUMENTATION

No documents were requested.

TRANSCRIPT

Full details of this meeting can be found in the transcript which is available online at:
http://www.gov.ns.ca/legislature/hansard/comm/cs/cs_2010mar02.htm

MAINTENANCE ENFORCEMENT PROGRAM — April 6, 2010

WITNESSES

Department of Justice
Ms. Marian Tyson, Deputy Minister
Ms. Judy Crump, Director of Maintenance Enforcement
Mr. Ken Winch, Director, Court Services
Ms. Jennifer Palov, Executive Director, Legal Services
Ms. Karen Crofton, Manager of Policy and Compliance

MATTERS OF DISCUSSION

The purpose of the meeting was to obtain an overview of the Maintenance Enforcement Program.

As a follow-up to the motion which was deferred at the March 2, 2010, meeting, the Chair reported to the committee that the Minister of Community Services has met with the Coalition to End Poverty in Nova Scotia. This information was satisfactory and no further action was taken regarding the motion.

A decision was made by the committee to post witness presentations on the committee's website.

MOTION

There were no motions.

DOCUMENTATION

The following information was requested and received:

- What is the average length of time between enforcement actions?
- What is the percentage of cold cases?
- What percentage of cases are in arrears?
- How many cases are in arrears and what is the dollar amount?
- Information on what enforcement tools are used, how often, etc.
- What is the total budget of the Maintenance Enforcement Program?
- List of Regional Coordinators.
- Information on Enrollment Kit improvements.

TRANSCRIPT

Full details of this meeting can be found in the transcript which is available online at:
http://www.gov.ns.ca/legislature/hansard/comm/cs/cs_2010apr06.htm

SERVICES FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES — May 4, 2010

WITNESSES

Department of Community Services
Ms. Judith Ferguson, Deputy Minister
Ms. Lorna MacPherson, Director, Services for Persons with Disabilities
Mr. Lucas Wide, Communications Officer

Nova Scotia Disabled Persons Commission
Ms. Anne MacRae, Executive Director
Mr. Brian Tapper, Chair
Mr. Burke MacCallum, Researcher
Mr. Craig MacKinnon, Researcher

Kings Regional Rehabilitation Centre
Ms. Betty Mattson, CEO

MATTERS OF DISCUSSION

The purpose of the meeting was to obtain an overview of the programs and services provided to persons with disabilities.

MOTIONS

The committee discussed correspondence received from the Face of Poverty Consultation. The following motion was passed by the committee:

> "THAT the committee accepts the Face of Poverty Consultation correspondence as received and will revisit it at the next meeting of the committee."

DOCUMENTATION

The following information was requested and received from the Kings Regional Rehabilitation Centre:

- A staffing breakdown, which would include full-time/part-time staff, job descriptions, location of employment, etc.

The following information was requested from the Nova Scotia Disabled Persons Commission:

- Statistical Manuals.

TRANSCRIPT

Full details of this meeting can be found in the transcripts which are available online at:
http://www.gov.ns.ca/legislature/hansard/comm/cs/cs_2010may04.htm
http://www.gov.ns.ca/legislature/hansard/comm/cs/cs_2010maa04.htm
http://www.gov.ns.ca/legislature/hansard/comm/cs/cs_2010myy04.htm

CHILDREN'S MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES — June 1, 2010

WITNESSES

Department of Health

Ms. Patricia Murray, Director, Children's Services
Dr. Linda Courey, Director, Mental Health and Addiction Services, Cape Breton DHA
Ms. Susan Mercer, Senior Director, Mental Health and Addictions Program, IWK Health Centre
Mr. Faizal Nanji, Acting Executive Director, Mental Health, Children's Services and Addiction Treatment Branch

MATTERS OF DISCUSSION

The purpose of the meeting was to obtain information on child and youth mental health services in Nova Scotia.

Further to the May 4, 2010, motion, the Face of Poverty Consultation correspondence was discussed by the committee. A decision was made to request witnesses to provide a copy of their presentation for distribution to committee members in advance of their appearance before the committee.

MOTIONS

There were no motions.

DOCUMENTATION

The following information was requested and received:

- How does Nova Scotia compare to other provinces with respect to children's mental health services?

- What percentage of the child and youth health budget goes to mental health? Is it more than 3.5% because 80% of mental illness exhibits itself in adolescence?

TRANSCRIPT

Full details of this meeting can be found in the transcript which is available online at:
http://www.gov.ns.ca/legislature/hansard/comm/cs/cs_2010jun01.htm

STATEMENT

OF

SUBMISSION

STATEMENT OF SUBMISSION

All of which is respectfully submitted to the
House of Assembly this 7th day of September, 2010

Mr. Jim Morton, MLA
Chair

I concur

Mr. Gary Ramey, MLA
(Vice-Chairman)

I concur

Mr. Leonard Preyra, MLA

I concur

Ms. Michèle Raymond, MLA

I concur

Mr. Maurice Smith, MLA

I concur

Mr. Leo Glavine, MLA

I concur

Mr. Geoff MacLellan, MLA

I concur

Honourable Chris d'Entremont, MLA

I concur

Mr. Alfie MacLeod, MLA